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RURAL AREAS
DEVELOPMENT

NEWSLETTER

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INDUSTRIALISTS DISCUSS RURAL POTENTIAL

"Almost half of the million dollar plants opened last year were outside the large metropolitan areas.

"From 1962 to 1966, the industrial employment rate tripled in the urban areas, but went up nearly eight times over the base period in rural areas, to 6.2 percent -- and up eleven times in the small town areas -- to 5.5 percent.

"Migration to the large cities, while still going on, is slowing, whereas, from 1950 to 1960, nonmetropolitan counties lost an average of 597,000 people a year, during the 1960 to 1963 period, this shrank 5-fold, to an average of only 118,000 people a year."

This was some of the encouragement toward continued investment in rural areas that was offered by Secretary of Agriculture Freeman in a speech before a rural industrialization conference in Washington, D.C., this May. The Secretary, Assistant Secretary John A. Baker, and USDA officials discussed the potential of Town and Country America with the group during a day long session. The meetings constituted an exchange of knowledge on rural development. The Department participants heard the firsthand experiences of the industrial leaders in locating plants in rural areas and were advised of ways the Department might be of even more help in support of rural industrialization. The industrialists, in turn, learned something about the new USDA Rural Plant Location Center and how it might be used to locate good potential sites for future industrial development.

The industrialists noted that USDA could be especially useful in educating and informing community citizens on ways to attract and keep industries. The company men felt that it was important that the townspeople adopt a constructive and progressive attitude with respect to new industry and that community facilities be upgraded if need be to attract people from other areas to come, work, and live. USDA officials indicated that this groundwork for industrial development is already being done by many Department and Cooperative Extension Service personnel in rural areas and that more of this can and will be done in the future. The USDA Technical Action Panels, located in counties throughout the United States are also showing communities how to create and present an attractive package of local backing and improved facilities to attract and hold new industry.

SECRETARY FREEMAN THANKS RURAL CLINIC SPONSORS

The citizens of Saint Marys County, Maryland, recently received the medical service of a 3-Day Eye Examination Clinic in their rural community of Leonardtown. In all, 691 persons were examined of whom 193 were found to have deficiencies requiring corrective attention. Sponsored by the District 22-C Lions Clubs cooperating with George Washington University Medical Center, the Society for the Prevention of Blindness, the Red Cross, Grey Ladies, and others, the cooperative effort brought a badly needed medical examination to a rural area. The follow-up to correct eye defects for those who could not afford it was financed by the Lions Clubs. Secretary Freeman wrote congratulating those primarily responsible for bringing this service to the rural community. He expressed his and the Department's support for more of this kind of public service for rural areas. County Technical Action Panel Chairman William B. Groome of Farmers Home Administration helped by having his office notify rural people that they could be examined.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS EXPANDED

Resource Conservation and Development Projects in Vermont and in Alabama were recently expanded. In east central Vermont the Ottauquechee Soil and Water Conservation District (471,808 acres) was added to the White River Project. Meanwhile, the counties of Etowah, Cherokee, and Cleburn (1,106,560 acres in total) were added to the Coosa Valley Resource Conservation and Development Project (Calhoun, Clay, St. Clair and Talladega Counties) in Alabama.

The White River RC&D Project now covers 1,107,008 acres in Orange, Windsor, Rutland, and Addison counties (and the town of Shelburne in Rutland County). Development of winter sports, impounding water for boating, fishing, and other recreation, developing vacation farms, constructing camping sites, and developing water resources for municipal and industrial uses are the primary objectives of this project.

The Coosa Valley RC&D Project now includes 2,783,060 acres in the Appalachian Regional Development Program area. Project objectives are to develop resources of the area through a coordinated effort of local, State and Federal groups and agencies. Measures include developing outdoor recreation, improving income from family farm operations, and accelerating land use adjustments and conservation treatment. Benefits expected are improved employment, housing, and farm income as well as a reduction in damages from flooding, erosion, and sedimentation.

UNEMPLOYED TRAINED FOR NEW JOBS CREATED IN OKLAHOMA RC&D PROJECT

"Rural development alone will not solve the national poverty problem. It will help by providing more job opportunities in rural communities and by providing better training and education for farm and rural youth. A new rural plant cannot employ the untrained, the illiterate, the victims of the poverty culture unless they are trained. Nor can it help the victims of racial injustice by its mere being, unless the root cause of discrimination is corrected. These problems must be attacked wherever they exist, in the cities as well as in the countryside..." So said Secretary of Agriculture Freeman recently as he spoke

to a meeting of the National Manpower Conference on the Rural to Urban Population Shift held at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

Meanwhile, a good illustration of what he was getting at was taking place in rural Oklahoma. New jobs were being created and local people were being trained to fill them -- the result of a trailblazing cooperative effort of the Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare.

A \$1-1/2 million special training program was recently begun in Oklahoma's Cherokee Hills to ready local citizens for jobs being added by the Resource Conservation and Development Project there. In the three counties that make up the project -- Adair, Cherokee, and Delaware -- more than 8 percent of the labor force is without a job.

In the first part of the program, through a \$300,000 grant by the Department of Labor under the Manpower Development and Training Act, 164 unemployed Oklahomans will be trained in constructing and operating recreation facilities, doing land improvement work, and many other specialized jobs -- from typing to poultry processing -- created through the RC&D project.

In the Cherokee Hills project, more than 70 of the planned 138 measures were started in the first year of operation, including ...

- 12 rural water systems
- 17 road or highway projects
- 12 recreation projects
- several studies to improve timber management and marketing
- an arts and crafts fair to promote the creative talents of the many Indian Americans in the project area
- a poultry processing plant, and other measures to spur economic development.

Installation of these measures has already created 900 man-years of employment. The 23 measures completed last year will bring 500 man-years of continuing annual employment, and are expected to increase gross income in the area by \$3.5 million.

When all measures currently planned for this RC&D Project are complete they should provide an additional 3,500 man-years of employment annually and an additional gross income of \$26.4 million to benefit the citizens in the project area.

HELP FOR SMALL FARMERS

The Rural Electrification Administration has begun a pilot program in which 9 rural electric cooperatives and one public power district, all financed by REA, will help small farmers to improve their incomes through the more productive use of electricity. The key: tailoring power use to the needs.

Consultants from the cooperatives and public power district along with agricultural specialists will help farm families adapt power use by:

- * Identifying instances in which new equipment and appliances will increase the efficiency and productivity of their individual farm operation.
- * Locating financing sources for purchases of new equipment and appliances.
- * Starting new crop or livestock production efforts where feasible.

The 10 REA-financed rural electric systems involved in the pilot project are: Pioneer Electric Cooperative, Greenville, Alabama; Ozarks Electric Cooperative, Fayetteville, Arkansas; Empire Electric Association, Cortez, Colorado; Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Greenville, Illinois; Twin-County Electric Power Association, Hollandale, Mississippi; Wheat Belt Public Power District, Sidney, Nebraska; Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Taos, New Mexico; Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Carrington, North Dakota; Belmont Electric Cooperative, St. Clairsville, Ohio; and the Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative; Dayton, Virginia.

CO-OPS INVEST \$300 MILLION IN RURAL FACILITIES

Farmer cooperatives in the United States invested over \$300 million in 1967 for new facilities located outside metropolitan areas, according to estimates by Farmer Cooperative Service (FCS).

In commenting on the estimates, Secretary Freeman said, "By locating these plants in non-metropolitan areas, farmer co-ops are helping stem the migration of rural people to over-crowded cities. And the co-ops are showing their confidence in the quality of rural labor and services."

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